

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL MILAN

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SECSTATE WASHDC 2370

C O N F I D E N T I A L MILAN 2370

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PFOR, IT

SUBJECT: LA MALFA OPPONENT BUCALOSSI ASSESSES ITALIAN SITUATION

REF MILAN 2330; 2193; 2344; 2151

SUMMARY. CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICAN LEADER SURPRISINGLY ENDORSES
GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY INCLUDING PCI. END SUMMARY.

1. FORMER MILAN MAYOR, NOW 71, CANCER SPECIALIST, REPUBLICAN
DEPUTY, ANTI-COMMUNIST AND FRIEND OF U.S. PIETRO BUCALOSS
IS LEADER OF REPUBLICAN PARTY GROUP OPPOSED TO LA MALFA'S
POLICY OF BRINGING PCI INTO GOVERNMENT. HE TALKED WITH
CONGEN OCTOBER 25 FOLLOWING DEFEAT ON ISSUE OF LOMBARDY
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT. WHILE BUCALOSS IS WELL-KNOWN MILAN
POLITICAL FIGURE WE ARE PUZZLED BY HIS REMARKS. HOWEVER,
SUBSTANCE OF HIS OPINIONS IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTANDING
WHAT PRESENT ITALIAN POLITICAL MILL IS GRINDING OUT.

2. BUCALOSS WAS DISCOURAGED AND SAID SO. WE WERE
WITNESSING SPLIT OF ALL NON-COMMUNIST PARTIES
INTENSE PRESSURE OF RELATIONS WITH COMMUNISTS COULD
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NO LONGER BE ESCAPED. REPUBLICANS IN VENICE HAD SPLIT

TO LEFT OF NATIONAL PARTY OVER SUPPORT FOR SOCIALIST COMMUNIST CITY GOVERNMENT. (SEE MILAN'S 2151 PARA 6). NOW LOMBARDY PRI HAD SPLIT ON A ME ISSUE CENTERING ON LOMBARDY REGIONAL GOVERNMENT (SEE MILAN'S 2193, 2344). THE SAME WAS TRUE WITH VARIATIONS IN DEGREE FOR OTHER PARTIES AS WELL.

3. HE HAD BEEN TALKING WITH OTHER PRI LEADERS. BRUNO VISENTINI AND FRANCESCO CAMPAGNA, NATIONAL PRI LEADERS AGREED WITH HIM BUT REFUSED TO SPEAK UP. LOCAL LEADERS IN LOMBARDY BACKED HIM. BUT HE APPEARED LITTLE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT BEING ABLE TO REVERSE LOCAL DEFEAT AT HANDS LA MALFA BACKERS.

4. BUCALOSSI CLAIMED LA MALFA MOTIVATED BY LOATHING FOR SOCIALISTS AND PERSONAL AMBITION. (I.E. PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC) LA MALFA HAD NEVER FORGIVEN THE PSI FOR HAVING BROUGHT DOWN THE MORO GOVERNMENT IN JANUARY 1976, ALTHOUGH SAID BUCALOSSI, THE PSI WAS ENTIRELY RIGHT IN HAVING DONE SO SINCE THE DC AND LA MALFA WERE DEALING DIRECTLY WITH THE COMMUNISTS AS DE MARTINO HAD CHARGED.

5. IN ANY EVENT, BUCALOSSI BELIEVED THAT THE SOCIALISTS WERE THE ONLY HOPE OF ESCAPING THE COMMUNISTS AND UNLIKE LA MALFA, HE HAD NOT GIVEN UP ON THIS HOPE.

6. HOWEVER, IN THE NEXT BREATH, BUCALOSSI DOUBTED THAT CRAXI COULD SUCCEED IN CHANGING THE COURSE OF THE PSI. AND THAT MEANT, HE SAID, THAT ITALY WAS HEADING INTO A MAJOR CRISIS.

7. IN BUCALOSSI'S VIEW, ANDREOTTI WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO GO MUCH FARTHER AS A MINORITY GOVERNMENT. HIS TIME WAS RUNNING OUT BEFORE HIS CURE FOR THE ITALIAN BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT COULD TAKE EFFECT. THEREFORE, ITALY WOULD SOON BE FACED WITH THREE CHOICES.

8. FIRST, THE DC COULD FORM A GOVERNMENT WITH THE COMMUNISTS. THAT MIGHT SOLVE SOME IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS BUT IT WOULD CREATE MANY MORE. THE DC WOULD RISK A SPLIT

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TO THE BENEFIT OF THE NEO-FASCISTS. AND THE COMMUNISTS WOULD BE ON THE WAY TO CAPTURING THE STATE. BUCALOSSI OPPOSED THIS OPTION.

9. SECOND, THE DC COULD FORCE NEW PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS. THE RESULT WOULD BE SOME DC GAIN AND PROBABLY NO COMMUNIST GAIN. BUT THE MINOR PARTIES WOULD BE DESTROYED. THIS WAS ONLY A SLIGHTLY BETTER OPTION THAN THE COOMASSO STORICO.

10. THIRD, A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY COULD BE FORMED. IT WOULD INCLUDE ALL PARTIES EXCEPT THE NEO-FASCISTS. BUCALOSSI SAID HE WOULD PREFER THIS SOLUTION EVEN THOUGH IT WOULD MAKE THE COMMUNISTS CABINET MINISTERS.

11. COMMENT. BUCALOSSI'S CONCLUSION IS VERY SURPRISING AND POSSIBLY SIGNIFICANT. INASMUCH AS HE HAS PREVIOUSLY FOUGHT ANY FORMULA TO INCLUDE THE COMMUNISTS IN THE REGIONAL

OR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, THIS PREFERENCE FOR A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY IS TOTALLY UNEXPECTED. IF HE EANS WHAT HE SAID, HE MAY HAVE SHIFTED POSITION BECAUSE HE CONCLUDES THAT HE HAS NO HOPE OF DEFEATING THE LA MALFA MAJORITY OR BECAUSE HE THINKS THAT THE CRISIS IS RUSHING UPON ITALY AND THIS IS THE LEAST BAD CHOICE. WE DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH BUCALOSSI TO CALIBRATE HIS CONFIDENTIAL REMARKS TO CONGEN. BUT WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK THAT HIS REACTIONS ARE DICTATED BY A FEELING THAT THE SITUATION IS UNRAVELLING FAIRLY RAPIDLY. FINAFINA

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